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NEWS AND NOTES

The black canker of the chestnut tree, said to be due to the fungus, *Mycelophagus Castaneae*, which attacks the young roots and their mycorrhiza, has recently caused severe losses in France. The use of oak and Japanese chestnut stock has been suggested as a means of control.

Arnaud and Foëx have discovered the perithecia of the oak *Öidium* (Compt. Rend. 154: 124-127. 1912) and they refer the fungus to *Microsphaera quercina*.

An expert examination by C. Wehmer of structural timbers attacked by dry rot has revealed the presence in many instances of *Coniophora cerebella* and *Poria vaporaria* associated with *Merulius lacrymans*.

Part 3, volume 7, of NORTH AMERICAN FLORA, by J. C. Arthur and F. D. Kern, appeared April 15, 1912. Eighteen genera of plant rusts are treated in the 108 pages, the American species of *Gymnosporangium* alone numbering 32 and of *Nigredo* (*Uromyces*) 83.

Professor Bruce Fink, of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, desires to see fresh material in abundance of species of the Collemaeae collected in various parts of New York State. This group of lichens is greatly in need of careful modern taxonomic treatment and Professor Fink will devote much of his time to it during the next two years.

The results of morphological and physiological researches on the genus *Coprinus*, by J. R. Weir, under the direction of Professors Goebel and Loew, were published in *Flora* in 1911. The paper comprises 60 pages of text and 25 figures,

An exhaustive report, containing 175 pages and 14 plates, on the history and cause of cocoanut bud-rot, by J. R. Johnston, appeared in February, 1912, as Bulletin 228 of the Bureau of Plant Industry at Washington. The author considers this serious disease as bacterial in origin and amenable to control by ordinary methods of sanitation and proper cultivation.

The seventh annual report of the Forest Park Reservation Commission of New Jersey, which has just been distributed, contains valuable suggestions regarding forest and shade trees and their protection, with some particularly good advice concerning the chestnut canker and its progress in the state.

A series of papers on the hymenomycetes of Lappland, by Lars Romell, was begun in *Arkiv för Botanik* 2: 1911, the first paper on the Polyporaceae, in which 12 species are described as new, comprising 35 pages and two double plates. These studies are of special interest to mycologists in this country because of the close relationship that exists between the plants of Lappland and boreal America.

A preliminary report of 116 pages on the gill-fungi of Ohio, with keys to genera and species, by W. G. Stover, has just appeared as part 9, volume 5, of the *Proceedings of the Ohio State Academy of Science*. This report is not only a guide to the species recognized but also to the literature describing them, and should prove valuable to students and others interested in the Ohio gill-fungi. The term "preliminary" is used very advisedly, as no one realizes better than Mr. Stover how much there is still to learn about this subject.

Observations on *Marasmius oreades*, the "fairy-ring" mushroom, have been made by Jessie Bayliss (*Jour. Econ. Biol.* 6: 111-132. *pl.* 5-7. 1911) with the following results, as reviewed in the *Experiment Station Record* for April, 1912.

It was found that *M. oreades* lives parasitically on grass. It attacks young roots, killing them by means of some toxic secretion. The fungus at first exerts a stimulating influence, and the grass

assumes a darker color owing to better nitrogenous nutrition. This is believed to be due to the proteolytic enzymes acting on the dead roots. There can always be distinguished a zone of dark-green grass outside as well as inside the zone of dead grass. The infected soil was found very impervious to moisture, owing probably to the air which is entangled within the meshes of the mycelium. It is thought that the fungus secretes a substance toxic to itself so as not to be able to grow in the same soil three years in succession. During the second year the fungus dies and the grass gains the ascendancy and flourishes, owing to the increased nitrogenous material available. The secretion of this toxic substance is believed to account for the disappearance of rings between the places of intersection when fairy rings meet.

Dr. E. D. Clark has called attention in the June *Torrey* to a recent brief paper by Radais and Sartory which shows the impossibility of removing certain of the most deadly poisons from fleshy fungi by treating them with hot water. His translation of this paper is, as follows:

"The autumn of 1911 has brought the usual outbreak of mushroom poisoning, with many fatal cases, caused primarily by eating *Amanita phalloides* Fr. The press considered that it was doing a useful thing in spreading among the people, with the authority of naturalists whose intentions were more laudable than their knowledge, the incorrect and dangerous notion that in treating the mushrooms with boiling water followed by repeated washing in cold water, all danger in eating them had been removed. For a long time mycologists have recognized that this treatment will often remove certain very soluble bitter and poisonous principles but they have never ceased to put people on their guard against the inefficiency of this method in the case of certain species, especially *Amanita phalloides*. The present seems to be an opportune time to confirm this caution with experiments. Our observations were made upon several poisonous species but with special reference to *A. phalloides*. We may sum up the results of our experiments in the following words: *A. phalloides* still preserves its toxic principle unchanged after being heated to boiling for some time; in the dried state its

toxicity is not weakened after standing a year nor has it lost its poisonous properties after remaining dry for six years; the poison is still held in the tissues of the mushroom after boiling with water.

“Therefore it is very unwise to spread broadcast the erroneous idea that all poisonous mushrooms may be rendered harmless by boiling with water and then washing repeatedly in cold water.”